

# **\*\*ATTENTION\*\***

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## SOUTHEAST WASHINGTON

# Deer Hunting

Mule deer and white-tail deer hunting in southeast Washington's rugged and scenic terrain is second only to elk hunting in popularity.

Antlerless hunting is by permit only and those permit seasons are separate from the general buck season; check the current hunting pamphlet for all season dates.

Seventy-five percent of the deer harvest in the southeast is on private land. Hunters are responsible for learning the ownership of any land they want to hunt and acquiring permission from landowners before hunting. Private land does not have to be posted to be off-limits to hunters.

Public land hunting is largely within the Umatilla National Forest, a map of which is available at the Pomeroy Ranger District office at Route 1, Box 54-A, Pomeroy, WA 99347.

The harvest usually consists of about 80 percent mule deer, but whitetails inhabit much of the area, too. The best hunting is generally found along the Snake

River breaks between the Grande Ronde River and Little Goose Dam and in the foothills of the Blue Mountains.

Due to the popularity of this area, hunters will find stiff competition for available bucks. The buck harvest averages 80 percent yearlings, with very few trophy class animals taken.

Mule deer populations in the mountainous areas (GMUs 160, 166, 169, 172, and 175) have declined somewhat in recent years, so hunting is only fair. However, due to restricted access in the mountains, buck survival is generally higher, so bucks live longer and produce trophy class antlers. Hunters looking for trophy mule deer should hunt these higher elevations, but understand that the hunting will be difficult; only a few deer will be seen each day afield, but the chances of one being a trophy buck are much better than at lower elevations. Long, hard hunting is the key to success in these areas.

White-tailed deer inhabit the

breaks of the Snake River, Tucannon River, and the entire foothills area of the Blue Mountains. The best areas for white-tail are GMUs 166, 163, 178, and the Anatone Flats area of GMU 181. Since most hunters concentrate on mule deer in southeast Washington, white-tails are often overlooked. As a result, some very large, high quality white-tail bucks can be found in these areas. Hunters familiar with traditional white-tail deer hunting techniques do well on the river bottoms and foothills.

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